

Consider the following data graciously provided by, and under review at, Health Affairs, the Nation's leading health policy journal.

These numbers are from a study supported by the Commonwealth Fund, a national philanthropic organization engaged in independent research on health and social policy issues, and is the product of the able scholarship of Dr. Jan Blustein, professor at the Wagner School of New York University.

This chart shows the extent to which low-income seniors with hypertension have prescription drug coverage. Hypertension—that is, high blood pressure—is prevalent among the elderly, occurring in better than 50 percent of persons over age 65. As you can see, seniors with hypertension, with incomes between 100 and 125 percent of poverty, only have prescription drug coverage about 65 percent of the time. Again, seniors whose income is between 100 percent and 125 percent of poverty have prescription drug coverage only about 65 percent of the time. Those between 126 percent and 150 percent of poverty, the next line down, fare even worse, receiving drug coverage only about half the time, 55 percent of the time.

Mr. President, 150 percent of poverty is not a lot of money, only about \$11,500 a year. There is clearly a need to help these people, and the bill I am introducing today does just that.

Let me be clear in stating this legislation is not intended as a permanent solution to the prescription drug problem. It does not provide stop-loss coverage for beneficiaries whose drug bills measure in the thousands of dollars. And because it uses Medicaid, the legislation uses a delivery mechanism that can differ from State to State in the scope of benefits it provides. But it does provide a benefit to those who need it the most. It is not perfect, but it is a start. Most important, it is an idea that has broad-based support from the public and in the Congress.

The Medicare Commission, although unable to reach a supermajority on its recommendation to fix the program—that is, Medicare—proposed covering drugs for low-income seniors through Medicare. In a recent poll, 86 percent of Americans favored adding a new Medicare drug benefit to cover part of the cost of the prescription drugs.

During the recent debate over tax cuts and the Federal budget, I, with 33 of my colleagues, sent the President a letter urging him to set aside one-third of the on-budget surplus for Medicare. I am pleased he announced his intentions just last week to do that, to fund a prescription drug benefit. Although creating a prescription drug benefit will be expensive, I think inaction is even more costly. In the words of the former President, Calvin Coolidge, "We cannot do everything at once but we can do something at once."

Let's do that something now to help our most vulnerable seniors, help them pay for the drugs that can save their lives.

By Mr. WELLSTONE:

S. 1839. A bill to provide that land which is owned by the Lower Sioux Indian Community in the State of Minnesota but which is not held in trust by the United States for the community may be leased or transferred by the Community without further approval by the United States; to the Committee on Indian Affairs.

APPROVAL NOT REQUIRED TO VALIDATE LAND TRANSACTIONS

• Mr. WELLSTONE. Mr. President, I am introducing legislation today which will allow the Lower Sioux Indian Community of Minnesota to sell non-trust land which falls outside their reservation borders. Enactment of this bill would give the Lower Sioux the same rights as any other landowner: to conduct real estate transactions without an act of Congress.

The Lower Sioux Community has acquired several parcels of land outside its reservation borders. None of these lands are held in trust by the United States. The Community pays state and local property taxes on the land and is not exempted from local zoning ordinances. The Community is treated like any other non-Indian land owner with regard to these parcels under the law—except that federal law requires that Congress approve the sale of land owned in fee simple by Indian tribes. In other words, should the Community wish to engage in almost any kind of land transaction involving these parcels, Congress must pass legislation to allow it to happen.

The Community seeks to have this burden lifted from them. It argues that the Community's development projects are unfairly restricted by this requirement. Indeed, my colleagues know how long it can take for Congress to act on even the most parochial and non-controversial of legislation. Last year, we were successful in passing legislation authorizing the sale of a single parcel of land owned by the Lower Sioux. It passed as part of a technical amendments bill, but the entire process took over six months. All of this for a plot of land no bigger than thirteen acres.

Obviously, such hurdles can make dealing with the Lower Sioux Community complicated and time consuming. Congress could even choose not to act upon a request. This puts the band at a competitive disadvantage relative to other land owners. The Lower Sioux is not a wealthy community. It can ill afford the hassles of pursuing closure in Washington to deals in Minnesota.

This legislation is introduced at the request of the Lower Sioux Community. The legislation does not cover any other tribe besides the Lower Sioux Community, and again, it applies only to land not held in trust by the United States or that is not within the borders of the Community's reservation. This is a narrowly focused bill designed to meet the unique needs and circumstances of the Lower Sioux Community.

Mr. President, this legislation will lower barriers to the Lower Sioux's

pursuit of economic opportunities to improve the lives of its members. With that in mind, I believe it is both appropriate and necessary and I urge its adoption.

I ask that a copy of a tribal council resolution in support of the bill be printed in the RECORD.

The material follows:

LOWER SIOUX COMMUNITY COUNCIL
RESOLUTION No. 08-99

Whereas, The Lower Sioux Community Council is the governing body of the Lower Sioux Indian Community in Minnesota, a federally recognized Indian tribe; and

Whereas, The Lower Sioux Community has in the past purchased land in its own name in fee simple for various Community purposes, including the promotion of economic development that would enable the Community and its members to become self-sufficient; and

Whereas, The Community must make additional such purchases in the future for economic development, housing, and other purposes; and

Whereas, There is no certainty that the Community will be able to transfer any of its fee land to the United States to hold in trust for the Community; and

Whereas, Under current federal law, when the Community purchases land in fee it must pay taxes on such land but it is not allowed to transfer, lease, mortgage, or otherwise convey interests in such land without a congressional statute allowing it to do so; and

Whereas, The restrictions on the transfer, lease, and mortgage of Community fee land unfairly burden the Community's development projects, and place the Community in a worse position than any other surrounding landowner.

Now Therefore be it *Resolved* that: The Lower Sioux Community Council urges the Minnesota congressional delegation specifically, and Congress generally, to support legislation that will remove the restrictions on the Community's ability to transfer, lease, mortgage, or otherwise convey interests in land owned by it in fee. The removal of these restrictions will allow the Community to use its fee land in the same manner as any other landowner in order to develop its economy and provide services to its members.●

ADDITIONAL COSPONSORS

S. 345

At the request of Mr. ALLARD, the name of the Senator from Delaware (Mr. ROTH) was added as a cosponsor of S. 345, a bill to amend the Animal Welfare Act to remove the limitation that permits interstate movement of live birds, for the purpose of fighting, to States in which animal fighting is lawful.

S. 424

At the request of Mr. COVERDELL, the name of the Senator from Tennessee (Mr. FRIST) was added as a cosponsor of S. 424, a bill to preserve and protect the free choice of individuals and employees to form, join, or assist labor organizations, or to refrain from such activities.

S. 670

At the request of Mr. JEFFORDS, the name of the Senator from Nebraska (Mr. KERREY) was added as a cosponsor of S. 670, a bill to amend the Internal Revenue Code of 1986 to provide that

the exclusion from gross income for foster care payments shall also apply to payments by qualifying placement agencies, and for other purposes.

S. 678

At the request of Mrs. FEINSTEIN, the name of the Senator from North Carolina (Mr. EDWARDS) was added as a cosponsor of S. 678, a bill to establish certain safeguards for the protection of purchasers in the sale of motor vehicles that are salvage or have been damaged, to require certain safeguards concerning the handling of salvage and nonrebuildable vehicles, to support the flow of important vehicle information to the National Motor Vehicle Title Information System, and for other purposes.

S. 866

At the request of Mr. CONRAD, the name of the Senator from Washington (Mr. GORTON) was added as a cosponsor of S. 866, a bill to direct the Secretary of Health and Human Services to revise existing regulations concerning the conditions of participation for hospitals and ambulatory surgical centers under the medicare program relating to certified registered nurse anesthetists' services to make the regulations consistent with State supervision requirements.

S. 1158

At the request of Mr. HUTCHINSON, the name of the Senator from Wyoming (Mr. THOMAS) was added as a cosponsor of S. 1158, a bill to allow the recovery of attorney's fees and costs by certain employers and labor organizations who are prevailing parties in proceedings brought against them by the National Labor Relations Board or by the Occupational Safety and Health Administration.

S. 1187

At the request of Mr. DORGAN, the names of the Senator from Georgia (Mr. COVERDELL) and the Senator from Rhode Island (Mr. REED) were added as cosponsors of S. 1187, a bill to require the Secretary of the Treasury to mint coins in commemoration of the bicentennial of the Lewis and Clark Expedition, and for other purposes.

S. 1327

At the request of Mr. DODD, his name was added as a cosponsor of S. 1327, a bill to amend part E of title IV of the Social Security Act to provide States with more funding and greater flexibility in carrying out programs designed to help children make the transition from foster care to self-sufficiency, and for other purposes.

S. 1384

At the request of Mr. ABRAHAM, the names of the Senator from North Dakota (Mr. DORGAN) and the Senator from North Dakota (Mr. CONRAD) were added as cosponsors of S. 1384, a bill to amend the Public Health Service Act to provide for a national folic acid education program to prevent birth defects, and for other purposes.

S. 1419

At the request of Mr. MCCAIN, the names of the Senator from Maine (Ms.

SNOWE), the Senator from Delaware (Mr. ROTH), the Senator from New Jersey (Mr. TORRICELLI), the Senator from Kansas (Mr. ROBERTS), and the Senator from Hawaii (Mr. AKAKA) were added as cosponsors of S. 1419, a bill to amend title 36, United States Code, to designate May as "National Military Appreciation Month".

At the request of Mrs. MURRAY, her name was added as a cosponsor of S. 1419, supra.

S. 1510

At the request of Mr. MCCAIN, the name of the Senator from South Carolina (Mr. THURMOND) was added as a cosponsor of S. 1510, a bill to revise the laws of the United States appertaining to United States cruise vessels, and for other purposes.

S. 1515

At the request of Mr. HATCH, the name of the Senator from South Dakota (Mr. JOHNSON) was added as a cosponsor of S. 1515, a bill to amend the Radiation Exposure Compensation Act, and for other purposes.

S. 1528

At the request of Mr. LOTT, the names of the Senator from Rhode Island (Mr. REED) and the Senator from Massachusetts (Mr. KERRY) were added as cosponsors of S. 1528, a bill to amend the Comprehensive Environmental Response, Compensation, and Liability Act of 1980 to clarify liability under that Act for certain recycling transactions.

S. 1547

At the request of Mr. MACK, his name was added as a cosponsor of S. 1547, a bill to amend the Communications Act of 1934 to require the Federal Communications Commission to preserve low-power television stations that provide community broadcasting, and for other purposes.

S. 1623

At the request of Mr. SPECTER, the names of the Senator from Delaware (Mr. ROTH) and the Senator from Oregon (Mr. WYDEN) were added as cosponsors of S. 1623, a bill to select a National Health Museum site.

S. 1708

At the request of Mr. MOYNIHAN, the name of the Senator from South Carolina (Mr. HOLLINGS) was added as a cosponsor of S. 1708, a bill to amend the Employee Retirement Income Security Act of 1974 and the Internal Revenue Code of 1986 to require plans which adopt amendments that significantly reduce future benefit accruals to provide participants with adequate notice of the changes made by such amendments.

S. 1781

At the request of Mr. LEVIN, the name of the Senator from Michigan (Mr. ABRAHAM) was added as a cosponsor of S. 1781, a bill to amend the Act that established the Keweenaw National Historical Park to require the Secretary of the Interior to consider nominees of various local interests in

appointing members of the Keweenaw National Historic Park Advisory Commission.

SENATE CONCURRENT RESOLUTION 63

At the request of Mr. ABRAHAM, the name of the Senator from Massachusetts (Mr. KENNEDY) was added as a cosponsor of Senate Concurrent Resolution 63, a concurrent resolution condemning the assassination of Armenian Prime Minister Vazgen Sargsian and other officials of the Armenian Government and expressing the sense of the Congress in mourning this tragic loss of the duly elected leadership of Armenia.

SENATE RESOLUTION 108

At the request of Mr. BREAUX, the names of the Senator from Delaware (Mr. ROTH), the Senator from Nebraska (Mr. HAGEL), the Senator from Arkansas (Mrs. LINCOLN), the Senator from Iowa (Mr. GRASSLEY), and the Senator from New York (Mr. SCHUMER) were added as cosponsors of Senate Resolution 108, a resolution designating the month of March each year as "National Colorectal Cancer Awareness Month".

SENATE RESOLUTION 128

At the request of Mr. COCHRAN, the names of the Senator from Montana (Mr. BAUCUS) and the Senator from Delaware (Mr. ROTH) were added as cosponsors of Senate Resolution 128, a resolution designating March 2000, as "Arts Education Month".

SENATE RESOLUTION 196

At the request of Mr. WARNER, the names of the Senator from Wisconsin (Mr. FEINGOLD), the Senator from Louisiana (Ms. LANDRIEU), and the Senator from Arizona (Mr. MCCAIN) were added as cosponsors of Senate Resolution 196, a resolution commending the submarine force of the United States Navy on the 100th anniversary of the force.

SENATE RESOLUTION 212—TO DESIGNATE AUGUST 1, 2000, AS "NATIONAL RELATIVES AS PARENTS DAY"

Mr. ABRAHAM submitted the following resolution; which was referred to the Committee on the Judiciary:

S. RES. 212

Whereas children are this Nation's most valuable resource;

Whereas the most important responsibility for this Nation's lawmakers and citizens is the protection and care of children;

Whereas in order to ensure the future success of this Nation, children must be taught values that will help them lead happy, healthy, and productive lives;

Whereas the family unit is most suitable to provide the special care and attention needed by children;

Whereas this year, many children will suffer from child abuse, neglect, poor nutrition, and insufficient child care, all of which jeopardize the well-being of young children and the opportunity for a fulfilling and successful adulthood;

Whereas extended family members, willing to open their hearts and homes to children whose immediate families are in crises, play an indispensable role in helping those children heal by providing them with a stable